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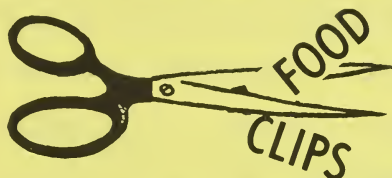
Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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CATALOGING - PREP.

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If you're "budget watching"—compare costs of various forms of food—fresh, instant, dried, frozen, or canned; enriched or unenriched. Buy the type that suits your needs and your likes.

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Don't shake the cup when measuring flour! Just spoon unsifted flour lightly into a measuring cup until the cup is overflowing. The measure will be more accurate if you do it this way, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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What's the difference between dough and batter? Dough is any mixture thick enough to be rolled or kneaded. A mixture that is thin enough to pour or drop from a spoon is known as batter.

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Like a browned pie crust? Sprinkle a little sugar on the top and it'll brown lightly.

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Be sure to keep cakes with cream or custard fillings or frostings (unless they will be eaten soon after baking) in the refrigerator.

Subject matter covered this issue:

- 1- Recreational buildings
- 2- The "Why" on cooking
- 3- House decay, termites
- 4- Proposal on open-dating

THE BUILDING BOOK

—from USDA

If you're planning on building an A-frame on your mountain retreat or down by the seashore, you'll be interested in a new publication called "Recreational Buildings and Facilities" Agriculture Handbook No. 438. Construction details are described for 17 cabins ranging from a regular log cabin, an A-frame structure, two pole-frame cabins, a tenant home, farm cottage to an Adirondac-type shelter.

If you're planning on building a horse barn, a two-horse trailer—or you need to build wooden obstacles for a horse show—this publication has that, too.

Plans for a complete outdoor fireplace for your barbecue—or even a boat landing are included in this cooperative effort of USDA's Extension Service, State Extension Service, State Experiment Stations, USDA's Cooperative State Research Service, and Agricultural Research Service. Economy of both material and labor has been given special emphasis. The booklet is available for 70 cents from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

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YOU SHOULD KNOW "WHY"* ———

Why is macaroni slowly added to rapidly boiling water?

Macaroni has a high starch content and swells as it cooks and absorbs water. A large amount of water is needed for the macaroni to expand and to keep the pieces from sticking together.

Adding macaroni slowly to rapidly boiling water gives the pieces less chance to stick together to settle to the bottom of the pan. If macaroni is dumped into boiling water (specially if a small amount of water is used), at least some of the macaroni will tend to stick together or sink to the bottom.

Is it helpful to wrap potatoes in aluminum foil?

Yes, potatoes wrapped in foil tend to bake in a shorter time than unwrapped potatoes because metal, especially a dull finish, absorbs heat faster and holds it better than the potato skin. (Many restaurants bake potatoes in foil for this reason.) The tight foil wrapping holds in steam, resulting in a softer skin, but also may cause the potato to be heavy and soggy.

Do you prefer fluffy, mealy potatoes?

Just scrub your potatoes and then rub the outside with fat or oil before baking...and skin will be soft. Do you prefer the skin of your baked potato to be crisp and chewy? Do nothing to it—wash it and put it in the oven.

Does it make any difference if eggs are refrigerated or not?

The eggs stored in the refrigerator spread less, have a thicker white and a higher, firmer and more rounded yolk. In the hardcooked refrigerated sample, the yolk was at, or near the center of the white. The eggs stored at room temperature showed a marked thinning of the white and a flattening of the yolk.

* Extension Home Economists at USDA suggest "Find Out Why Experiments" for working with young people as a Food-Nutrition Project developed for the National 4-H Service Committees.

KEEP A HEALTHY HOUSE

—Here's How!

Basic good house construction and then continued basic house maintenance is the way to a healthy house according to researchers at the Southern Forest Experiment Station, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Research proves the point. House maintenance is extremely important—but most people just don't know "how" to maintain their homes. Decay is the first consideration, and the second is the problems of termites and other wood-destroying insects. Then we also have the wood-nesting insects.

A "health checklist" for your house would include questions such as—"Is all wood in the house above the level of the soil? Does water drain away from the house? Is plumbing, including drains, free of leaks? Does roof sag? (which may indicate possible rafter decay)." A complete checklist* would help the homeowner.

The prescription for preventing decay is simple—just make sure that the wood is kept dry. Don't forget—wood soaks up water and retains it for long periods. Even indoor water sources may eventually lead to decay of the wood that becomes wet. Check leaks in caulking around bathtubs—even this has caused many problems before the owner knew that any damage was occurring.

The threat of termites is always with homeowners because most of us are more fearful of subterranean termites than of decay. Homeowners should learn to recognize the damage of insects such as wood termites and certain beetles—and even be mindful of carpenter ants and bees that can cause damage as well as be a major nuisance.

Termites are yellow-brown to black bodied insects with two pairs of long, whitish, translucent wings of equal size. They have thick waistlines. And moisture is the key word when it comes to termites—they need it to live. Without moisture, a termite colony will die. But, don't forget—moisture can be had even from the soil, unless it is treated with insecticide. Any wood that touches the ground should be pressure-treated with preservative—as well as the soil where the wood is touching.

Available now is the new Forest Service Publication* called "Finding and Keeping a Healthy House". —For a single copy, write to the Editor of Food and Home Notes, Office of Communication, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.



Let's Make a Date!

If you picked up a can of beef stew and noticed a date on one end, chances are you wouldn't be sure what it means. The U.S. Department of Agriculture sympathizes with your confusion, and has issued a proposal to try to make open-dating a little easier to understand---at least as far as federally inspected meat and poultry products are concerned, anyhow!

Different food products variously carry different types of dates--including the date the processor packed the product...the date the store should stop selling it...and the date you should last use the food to assure best quality. Which one you're looking at can make a big difference!

The meat and poultry industries have traditionally used coded dates, USDA said, but some meat and poultry processors do want to use open-dating. USDA thinks processors who want to use open dates should be required to add a short explanatory phrase telling exactly what the dates mean--such as "do not sell after..." or "use before...".

Do you agree? Write and tell us about it. Send your comments in duplicate before May 21 to the USDA Hearing Clerk, Washington, D.C. 20250.

COMMENTS AND INQUIRIES TO:

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